

**Patent claims:**

1. The use of catechins or gallic esters of catechins or aqueous or organic extracts from plants or parts of plants which have a content of catechins or gallic esters of catechins, for example the leaves of the Theaceae plant family, in particular of the species *Camellia sinensis* (green tea) or typical ingredients thereof (such as e.g. polyphenols or catechins, caffeine, vitamins, sugars, minerals, amino acids, lipids), for the prophylaxis, treatment and/or care of dry skin conditions.
2. The use of catechins or gallic esters of catechins or aqueous or organic extracts from plants or parts of plants which have a content of catechins or gallic esters of catechins, for example the leaves of the Theaceae plant family, in particular of the species *Camellia sinensis* (green tea) or typical ingredients thereof (such as e.g. polyphenols or catechins, caffeine, vitamins, sugars, minerals, amino acids, lipids), for stimulating the sphingolipid synthesis or for strengthening the lipid barrier of human skin.
3. The use as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the catechin or catechins is or are chosen from the group (-)-catechin, (+)-catechin, (-)-catechin gallate, (-)-gallocatechin gallate, (+)-epicatechin, (-)-epicatechin, (-)-epicatechin gallate, (-)-epigallocatechin and (-)-epigallocatechin gallate.
4. The use as claimed in claim 1 or 2, in cosmetic or dermatological preparations comprising vegetable extracts with a content of catechins, in particular those preparations which comprise green tea extracts.

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